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Wiki Assignment #1

**Action Research** can be defined as a research which is intended to solve an immediate problem. Action research can be conducted by a single individual or a team of colleagues. It is about the improvement of a specific aspect of an organization. The key component of action research is to analyze data because it will assist in making changes. In the case of education, action research is when educators take it upon themselves looking for a resolution to some sort of education problem or issue. The intent of action research is to make improvements where it is needed. Many inspiring teachers and teachers alike conduct action research with the hope to make changes in the education system.

There are various education issues that an educator may look into. All are interesting to discuss and further my knowledge on the issues. So throughout the various topics to choose from I narrowed it down to two. The first being is bullying among special education students. Special education students are among one of the highest to face bullying. Special education students undergo hardship from their schoolmates because of their disabilities. There is an overwhelming amount of research on this case, so this topic would not be as challenging to complete. Though, in my honest opinion there is no resolution to bullying. Bullying has been an epidemic on the school system for generations. Educators have proposed on solutions to subdue the issue but bullying keeps occurring.

The second being is the lack of male teachers in the classroom and how it effects student progress. It is evident that there are a lack of male teachers in the elementary school level. I had only one male teacher from pre-k to fifth grade. I understand as a male in the world of education am the minority. As a soon to be male teacher I find it troubling that there are a lack of male teachers. So I ask why is it this way? Why are men hiding away from education? Does it impact on student’s development? Doesn’t young boys need a male role model in school? An interesting topic with numerous prior research on it.

I decided that the best topic to undergo is on the subject of lack of male teachers in education. Upon my research I have found several interesting facts. The problem of the shortage of male teachers is an issue throughout the nation. Also, I have found that most male teachers are found teaching in high school versus elementary school. Which brings about another question as to why most male teachers stray away from teaching elementary school, the reasons why I will explain later on. Nonetheless this causes a problem for young boys and girls in the elementary school level who need a male role model to look up to. I believe that students need to have both female and male teachers. Teachers are individuals in which students look up to and seek guidance from them. If elementary schools are predomitaly filled with women does it matter? Does it in fact effect student development? I believe for students to grow up as strong, independent individuals they need the guidance of both male and female teachers. The years that students experience in the elementary level are the most essential in their lives.

With my intial research I have found that the percentage of male teachers are records low. The National Education Association (NEA) has conducted research on the matter and released statistics for the year 2006 that shows only one-forth of teachers are male. With shocking data as that the President of the NEA, Reg Weaver, commented on the matter and explains why he believes their is a shortage. He states:

“We're experiencing a significant male-teacher shortage," confirms Reg Weaver, president of the NEA. The shortage is particularly acute in early-childhood and lower grades, and the reason is partly pay related. "Teachers in elementary school typically don't make as much money as teachers in high school do," Weaver says. "More than 50 percent of male teachers are at the high school level."

Snyder, “Male Call: Recruiting More Men to Teach Elementary School”

As I stated before most men will be teaching at the high school level, a total over 50 percent. Reg Weaver explains that money is one of the underlying factors for the shortage of male teachers. Though high school teachers might make more they will not be making alot more then elementary school teachers. The media salary for high school teachers is alittle over $56,000, which is not a substational alot more money compared to what an elementary school teacher makes, which the median salary for an elementary school teacher is alittle over $54,000. After many years of teaching, teachers will find themselves making $100,000 but is that in no way close to what they started making. As an inspiring male teacher I have questioned the issues of a teacher's salary and how I would not be making alot of money. Then again, no one decides to become a teacher for the money.

The NEA believes that one of the most important ways to resolve the decline in male teachers is to start a recruiting initiative at the college level. It is essential to inform students earlier on and get them interested from the beginning. Many students on their first and second year of college are still figuring out what career they want to get into. If recruters were to inform students of the real benefits they might have a chance to make a change.

During my intial research I have found a non-profit organization called Men Teach. The purpose of the organization is to assist male teachers in finding positions and help them keep those positions within the education system. The organization believes that their is a connection between student progression and lack of male teachers. Looking through the organizations website many of the articles discuss on how a lack of a male presence in the classroom can effect student progression and they also discuss the importance of a male role model in the classroom. The organization and myself included believe that students daily lives would improve with the presence of a male teacher in their life. Though, I do believe that a male role model is needed in the classroom their are some researchers who state that students do not benefit anymore having a male teacher.

Research like this brings about many questions to myself. Where do I even begin with my action research? What would be solution to the lack of male teachers? Do in fact male teachers benefit student development and if so how do we get more men into the field? I seek to answer these questions and I hope to find a resolution to this issue.

**Is it researchable?**

Yes, most definetely this topic is researchable. I have stumbled upon prior research on the lack of male teachers and they are of great value to my research. The resources I have found on the internet have tons of articles and interviews on the improtance of male teachers and the current lack of male teachers. The various articles and interviews I have looked at people conclude that it is vital for students to have a male presence in their everyday lives. Also, as I stated before their are researchers who believe that a male presence in the classroom makes no difference. The researchers who conclude that male presence makes no difference believe that what actually matters is the quality of the teacher and not the gender. Some websites that assisted me with defining the problem are:

* Snyder, Tamar. (April 28th, 2008). “Male Call: Recruiting More Men to Teach Elementary School.” Retrieved February 3rd, 2010 from [http://www.edutopia.org/male-teacher-shortageHYPERLINK "http://www.edutopia.org/male-teacher-shortage".](http://www.edutopia.org/male-teacher-shortageHYPERLINK%20%22http://www.edutopia.org/male-teacher-shortage%22.)
* Johnson, Shaun P. (2008) Retrieved February 11th, 2010. The Status of Male Teachers in Public Education.

Their are numerous **Pros & Cons** to this topical research. I have gone in great length explainging the numerous Pros of having a male presence in the classroom but I will also be researching the disadvantage or the Cons. As I explained before their is the issue of the presence of male teachers makes no impact in a student's progression, that what in fact makes an impact is the quality of the teacher that the student has. In my intial research I have found an article that would describe one of the Cons that I will need to investigate in my research. The article “The Mistrusted Male Teacher” by Lauren Cox. The article discusses the parent biases toward male teachers and the male stereoptypes. Cox mentions, “Nelson, who took a graduate fellowship at Harvard to study men in secondary school teaching, found that overzealous suspicions of sexual abuse are one of the top three reasons why the teaching profession doesn't draw more men. From his research, the other two reasons are perceptions about men's nurturing abilities and low social status combined with low pay. “(Cox). Nelson being the founder of the organization MenTeach believes that due to the stereotypes among men many believe that male teachers are unsafe and unfit to be in the classrom teaching young students. For this reason many men stray away from the education system.

Another article I stumbled upone discusses gender relations in the education system. “Attention is drawn to the problematic gap between neo-liberal educational policy–related discussions about male teacher shortage in elementary schools and research-based literature which provides a more nuanced analysis of the impact of gender relations on male teachers’ lives and developing professional identities.” (Martino, 2008, pg 189) Martino discusses that the presence of a male teachers is irrelevant to student development. It does not matter how many male teachers there are but the quality of teachers.

* Martino, Wayne John. (2008) Retrieved February 8th, 2010. Male Teachers as Role Models: Addressing Issues of Masculinity, Pedagogy and the Re-Masculinization of Schooling The University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada.
* Cox, Lauren. (The Mistrusted Male Teacher. Retrieved February 13th, 2009 from [http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Story?id=5670187HYPERLINK "http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Story?id=5670187&page=3"&HYPERLINK "http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Story?id=5670187&page=3"page=3HYPERLINK "http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Story?id=5670187&page=3".](http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Story?id=5670187&page=3)

**Current Instructional Strategies**

For this part of the research I will be examing the current instructional strategies and how male teachers are part of it. I will observe the teaching styles of a male teacher and also a female teacher in the same grade. With the date I will gather from my observations I will compare the pros and cons of the different classroom dynamics. I will look at various studies including studies by the Nationa Education Association (NEA) to indentify the correlation between male teachers and student performance. I will examine what is expected from male teachers from the adminstration. Have boundaries been set for male teachers in the education system? “The need for more male role models in young boys’ lives is one of the main reasons underpinning the call for more male teachers in primary schools. However, the exact responsibilities and attributes associated with the term “male role mode” have yet to be clearly estabished.” (Cushman)

* Cushman, Penni. (2008) Retrieved February 12th, 2010. So what exactly do you want? What principals mean when they say ‘male role model.” Gender and Education Vol. 20, No. 2, March 2008, pp 123–136
* Bryce, T. G. K.,Blown, E. J. (2007) Retrieved February 12th, 2010. Gender Effects in Children's Development and Education. International Journal of Science Education.
* Lahelma, Elina. (2000) Retrieved February 12th, 2010. Lack of Male Teachers: A Problem for Students or Teachers?

**Practitioners/Theorists**

There are a few practitioners that emphazie the correlation between male teachers and student development. Some of the practitioners that I will mention in my action research are Wayne John Martino, Georgie Binks, and Shaun P. Johnson. A theorist that I will be talking about in my action research paper is Jean Piaget and his theory of Cognitive Development. I will also look into other theorist for guidance but as of now I will stick with one.

**Intervention**

The intervention will be that their is need more male teachers in the elementary school level so young boys can look to a positive role mode. The responsibility is seek more men in the education system is the Department of Education. The Department of Education needs to conduct workshops or begin recruiting potentional teachers in college. I understand that there are studies that states that the male presence in the classroom is irrelevent in a student's development but I disagree. In elementary school I had no male teacher and I may have not realized it at the time but if I had at least one male teacher, I believe it would have made a positive impact, in my life. Some students who do not have a male role in their home can look up to their teacher for support. Their are a number of benefits to having a male teacher and my intervention involves looking at the differences between male and female teachers. By doing so I will find out whether or not their is enough evidence to conclude that more male teachers do make a difference.

**Measuring Intervention**

How I will measure my intervention by research the various works from many practitioners/theorist. I will be looking at various statistics and studies that examine the correlation between student and teacher.Also, through my field observations and interviews. I plan on observing the classrooms of male teachers and looking at student work and how it has progressed over the year. Also, I would like to look at the differences on how male teachers versus female teachers use strategic teaching approaches and techinques. Also, I will attempt to examine the importance of emotion, in all this. Can a male presence spark emotion? Are male teachers the missing link for students? So to examine the possible importance of emotions I will be looking at the relationship that students have built with their teachers. As stated before few parents have a bias toward male teachers, teaching in the elemantary school level. So therefore I will be examing the prejudices and stereotypes that are connected to male teachers. I hope that at the end of research I will have come up with a resonable solution that could be an end to the epidemic that we are seeing in the education system.

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